

Text of Hughes' Speech Accepting G. O. P. Presidential Nomination

Senator Harding, members of the notification committee, and fellow citizens: "This occasion is more than a mere ceremony of notification. We are not here to indulge in formal expressions. We come to state in a plain and direct manner our faith, our purpose and our pledge. This representative gathering is a happy augury. It means the strength of reunion. It means that the party of Lincoln is restored, alert, effective. It means the unity of a common perception of paramount national needs. It means that we are neither deceived nor deluded by abnormal conditions. We know that we are in a critical period, perhaps more critical than any period since the Civil war. We need a dominant sense of national unity; the exercise of our best constructive powers; the vigor and resourcefulness of a quickened America. We desire that the republican party as a great liberal party shall be the agency of national achievement, the organ of the effective expression of dominant Americanism.

FOREIGN RELATIONS. "Our foreign relations have assumed grave importance in the past three years. The conduct of diplomatic intercourse is in the keeping of the executive. It rests chiefly with him whether we shall show competence or incompetence; whether the national honor shall be maintained; whether our prestige and influence shall be lowered or advanced. What is the record of the administration? The first duty of the executive was to command the respect of the world by the personnel of our state department and our representation abroad. No party exigency could excuse the non-performance of this obvious obligation. Still, after making every allowance for certain commendable appointments, it is apparent that this obligation was not performed. At the very beginning of the present administration, where in the direction of diplomatic intercourse there should have been conspicuous strength and exertion, we had weakness and ineptness. Instead of assuring respect, we invited distrust of our competence and speculation as to our capacity for firmness and decision. That trust was stockingly betrayed in order to satisfy 'deserving democrats.' The record showing the administration's disregard of its responsibilities with respect to our representation in diplomacy is an open book and the specifications may easily be had. It is a record revealing professions be-
"Take, for example, the withdrawal of Ambassador Herrick from France. There he stood, in the midst of alarms, the very embodiment of courage, of poise, of executive capacity, universally trusted and beloved. No diplomat ever won more completely the affections of a foreign people; and there was no better fortune for this country than to have at the capital of any one of the belligerent nations a representative thus esteemed. Yet the administration permitted itself to supercede him."

MEXICO. "The dealings of the administration with Mexico constitute a confused chapter of blunders. We have not helped Mexico. She lies prostrate, impoverished, famine-stricken, overwhelmed with the war and outrage of international strife, the helpless victim of a condition of anarchy which the course of the administration only served to promote. For ourselves we have witnessed the overthrow of our citizens and the destruction of their property. We have made enemies, not friends. Instead of commanding respect and deserving good will by sincerity, firmness, and consistency, we provoked misapprehension and deep resentment. In the light of the conduct of the administration no one could understand its professions. Deceiving international professions, unheeded except for the moment, have not even kept out of actual conflict, and the soil of Mexico is stained with the blood of our soldiers. We have resorted to physical force, to the use of arms without gaining the professed object. It is a record which cannot be examined without a profound sense of humiliation. "When the administration came into power Huerta was exercising authority as provisional president of Mexico. He was certainly in fact the head of the government of Mexico. Whether or not he should be recognized was a question to be determined in the exercise of a sound discretion, but according to correct principles. If crimes were committed, we do not palliate them. We make no defense of Huerta. But the administration had nothing to do with the moral character of Huerta. If in fact he represented the government of Mexico, we shall never worthily present our usefulness, or serve humanity, by wrong-headedness. So far as the character of Huerta is concerned, the hollowing of the pretensions on this score is revealed by the administration's subsequent patronage of Villa (whose qualifications as an assassin are indisputable), whom apparently the administration was ready to recognize had he achieved his end and fulfilled what then seemed to be his hopes."

Worked Against Huerta. "The question is not as to the non-recognition of Huerta. The administration did not content itself with refusing to recognize Huerta, who was recognized by Great Britain, Germany, France, Russia, Spain and Japan. The administration undertook to destroy Huerta, to control Mexican politics, even to deny Huerta the right to be a candidate for the office of president at the election the administration demanded. In the summer of 1915, John Lind was despatched to the City of Mexico as the president's personal spokesman and representative to the unrecognized Huerta in order to demand that the latter eliminate himself. It was an unjustifiable mission, most offensive to a sensitive people. John Lind insisted indignantly. The administration continued to direct its efforts at the destruction of the only government Mexico had."

"In the spring of 1914, occurred the capture of Vera Cruz. Men from one of our ships had been arrested at Tampico and had been discharged with an apology. But our admiral demanded a salute, which was refused. Thereupon the president went to congress, asking authority to use the armed forces of the United States. Without waiting for the passage of the resolution Vera Cruz was seized. It appeared that a shipload of ammunition for Huerta was about to enter that port. There was a natural opposition to this invasion and a battle occurred in which nineteen Americans and over a hundred Mexicans were killed. This, of course, was war. Our dead soldiers were praised for dying like heroes in a war of service. Later we retired from Vera Cruz giving up this note of warfare. We had not obtained the salute which was demanded."

Americans Unprotected. "Meanwhile, the administration utterly failed to perform its obvious duty to see to the protection for the lives and property of our citizens. It is most unworthy to slur those who have investments in Mexico in order to escape a condemnation for the non-performance of this duty. These can be no excuse, for we have no debate and there can be no debate, as to the existence of this duty on the part of our government. The bitter hatred aroused by the course of the administration multiplied outrages, while our failure to afford protection to our citizens evoked the scorn and contempt of Mexicans. "In the midst of the greatest danger to the hundreds of Americans congregated at Tampico, our ships which were in the harbor were withdrawn and our citizens were saved only by the intervention of Mexican officers giving aid unasked by British and German ships. The official excuse of the secretary of the navy is an extraordinary commentary. Our ships, it seems, had been ordered to Vera Cruz, but as it appeared that they were not needed, the order was rescinded."

Left to Ravages. "Destroying the government of Huerta we left Mexico to the ravages of revolution. I shall not attempt to narrate the hideous story of the barbarities committed. We were then told that Mexico was just to spill as much blood as she pleased to settle her affairs. The administration vacillated with respect to the embargo on the export of arms and munitions to Mexico."

For three years the Mexican republic has been torn with civil strife; the lives of Americans and other aliens have been sacrificed; vast properties developed by American capital and enterprise, have been destroyed or rendered unproductive; bandits have been permitted to roam at will through the territory contiguous to the United States, and to seize without punishment or without effective attempt the property of Americans. While the lives of citizens of the United States who ventured to remain in Mexican territory or to return there to protect their interests have been taken, in some cases, barbarously taken, and the murders have neither been apprehended nor brought to justice."

Has No Policy. "The nation has no policy of aggression toward Mexico. We have no desire for any part of her territory. We wish her to have peace, stability, and prosperity. We should be ready to aid her in binding up her wounds, in relieving her from starvation and distress, and in giving her the means of her own development. Our disinterested friendship, the conduct of this administration has created difficulties which we shall have to surmount. We shall have to overcome the antipathy needlessly created by this conduct and to develop genuine respect and confidence through which alone we can promote an enduring friendship."

EUROPEAN WAR. "In this time of European war, drawing its strength from every race, the national security demands that there shall be no paucity of American rights. The greater the danger of divisive influences, the greater is the necessity for the unifying force of a just, strong and patriotic position. We continue no covert policies, no intrigues, no secret schemes. We are unservedly, devotedly, wholeheartedly, for the United States. This is the rallying point for all Americans. That is my position. I stand for the unflinching maintenance of all American rights on land and sea. "We have had a clear and definite mission as a great neutral nation. It was for us to maintain the integrity of international law, to vindicate our rights as neutrals; to protect the lives of our citizens, their property and trade from wrongful acts. Putting aside any question as to the highest possibilities of moral leadership in the maintenance and vindication of the law of nations in connection with the European war, at least entitled to the safeguarding of American rights. But this has not been secured. We have had brave words in a series of notes, but despite our protests the lives of Americans have been destroyed. What

does it avail to use some of the strongest words known to diplomacy if ambassadors can receive the impression that the words are not to be taken seriously? It is not words, but the strength and resolution behind the words, that count. The chief function of diplomacy is prevention; but in this our diplomacy failed, doubtless because of its impaired credit and the manifest lack of disposition to back words with action. Had this government by the use of both informal and formal diplomatic opportunities, left no doubt that when we said 'strict accountability' we meant precisely what we said, and that we should unhesitatingly vindicate that position, I am confident that there would have been no destruction of American lives by the sinking of the Lusitania. "It is a great mistake to say that resort to force in the interest of American rights would have led to war. Rather, in that course lay the best assurance of peace. Weakness and indecision in the maintenance of known rights are always sources of grave danger; they forfeit respect and invite serious wrongs, which in turn create an uncontrollable popular resentment. That is not the path of national security. Not only have we a host of resources short of war by which to enforce our just demands, but we shall never promote our peace by being stronger in words than in deeds. We should not have found it difficult to maintain peace, but we should have maintained peace with honor. During this critical period, the only danger of war has lain in the weak course of the administration. "I do not put life and property on the same footing, but the administration has not only been remiss with respect to the protection of American lives; it has been remiss with respect to the protection of American property and American commerce. It has been too much disposed to be content with leisurely discussion."

Denounce all plots and conspiracies. "In the interest of any foreign nation, utterly intolerable is the use of our soil for alien intrigues. Every American must unreservedly condemn them, and support every effort for their suppression. But here, also, prompt, vigorous and adequate measures on the part of the administration were needed. There should have been no hesitation; no notion that it was wise and politic to delay."

PREPAREDNESS. "We are a peace-loving people, but we live in a world of arms. We have no thought of aggression, and we desire to preserve our democracy. We desire without doubt to consider it necessary to review the arguments usually advanced on the one side or the other, as my convictions proceed from a somewhat different point of view. Opponents may differ, but in my judgment cannot defeat this movement. Nor can I see any advantages in the delay which can possibly offset the disadvantages which are necessarily incident to these continued negotiations."

ADMINISTRATIVE EFFICIENCY. "Confronting every effort to improve conditions, is the means of incompetent administration. It is an extraordinary notion that democracy can be faithfully served by ineptness. Democracy needs exact knowledge, special skill and thorough training in its servants. I have already spoken of the disregard of proper standards, in numerous instances, in appointments to the diplomatic service. Unfortunately there has been a similar disregard of executive responsibility in appointments to important administrative positions in our domestic service. Even with respect to technical bureaus the demands of science have been compelled to yield to the demands of politics. "Our opponents promised economy but they have shown a reckless extravagance. They have been wasteful and profligate. It is time that we had fiscal reform. We demand a simple business-like budget. I believe that only through a responsible budget, proposed by the executive, that we shall avoid financial waste and secure proper administrative efficiency, and a well-balanced consideration of new administrative proposals."

WOMAN SUFFRAGE. "I endorse the declaration in the platform in favor of woman suffrage. I do not consider it necessary to review the arguments usually advanced on the one side or the other, as my convictions proceed from a somewhat different point of view. Opponents may differ, but in my judgment cannot defeat this movement. Nor can I see any advantages in the delay which can possibly offset the disadvantages which are necessarily incident to these continued negotiations."

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ORGANIZATION OF PEACE. "We are deeply interested in what I may term the organization of peace. We cherish no illusions. We know that the recurrence of war is not to be prevented by pious wishes. If the conflict of national interests is not to be brought to the final test of force, there must be the development of international organization in order to provide international justice and to safeguard so far as practicable the peace of the world. "Arbitration treaties are useful within their proper sphere, but it is worse than folly to ignore the limitations of this remedy or to regard such treaties as an adequate means of preventing war. There should be an international tribunal to decide controversies susceptible of judicial determination, thus affording the advantage of judicial standards in the settlement of particular disputes and of the gradual growth of a body of judicial precedents. In emphasizing the desirability of such a tribunal, we are in no disposition of controversies of a justifiable sort, it must be overlooked that there are also legislative needs."

INDUSTRY AND TRADE. "When we contemplate industrial and commercial conditions, we see that we are living in a fool's paradise. The temporary prosperity to which our opponents point has been created by the abnormal conditions incident to the war. With the end of the war there will be the new conditions determined by a new Europe. Millions of men in the trenches will then return to work. The energies

of each of the now belligerent nations, highly trained, will then be turned to production. "On the other hand, in this country, with the stoppage of the manufacture of munitions, a host of men will be turned out of employment. We must meet the most severe competition in industry. We are undisciplined, defective in organization, loosely knit, industrially unprepared."

"Our opponents promised to reduce the cost of living. This they have failed to do; but they did reduce the opportunities of making a living. Let us not forget the millions of men who are in this country under the new tariff prior to the outbreak of the war. Production had decreased, business languishing; new enterprises were not undertaken, instead of expansion, there was curtailment, and our streets were filled with the unemployed. It was estimated that in the City of New York over 300,000 were out of work. Throughout the country the jobless demanded relief."

"The republican party stands for the principle of protection. We must apply that principle fairly, without abuses, in a scientific manner as possible, and congress should be aided by the investigations of an expert body. We stand for the safeguarding of our economic independence; for the development of American industry, for the maintenance of American standards of living. We propose that in the competitive struggle that is about to come the American workman shall not suffer."

LABOR. "We stand for the conservation of the just interests of labor. We do not desire production or trade, or efficiency in either, for its own sake, but for the betterment of the lives of human beings. We shall not have any lasting industrial prosperity, unless we buttress our industrial endeavors by adequate means for the protection of health; for the elimination of unnecessary perils to life and limb; for the safeguarding of our future through proper laws for protection of women and children in industry; for increasing opportunities for education and training."

"I stand for adequate federal workmen's compensation laws, dealing not only with the interest of government, but with those employees who are engaged in interstate commerce and are subject to the hazard of industry, so that those activities which are within the spheres of the constitutional authority of congress may be dealt with a suitable law."

AGRICULTURAL. "We propose to promote by every practicable means our agricultural interests and we include in this program an effective system of rural credits. We favor the wise conservation of our natural resources. We desire not only that they shall be safeguarded, but that they shall be economically developed and used to the utmost public advantage."

NATIONAL TRUSTEESHIP. "We turn to other considerations of important policy. One of these is our attitude toward the Philippines. That I may say, is not a question of self-interest. We have assumed international obligations which we should not permit ourselves to evade. A breach of trust is not an admissible American policy, though our opponents have seemed to care so little. We should administer government in the Philippines with a full recognition of our international duty, without partisanship, with the aim of maintaining the highest standards of expert administration and in the interest of the Philippines. This is a matter of national honor."

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